TOLD IN THE TWILIGHT

STORIES TO TELL TO CHILDREN

WITH PICTURES DRAWN BY
BLANCHE McMANUS

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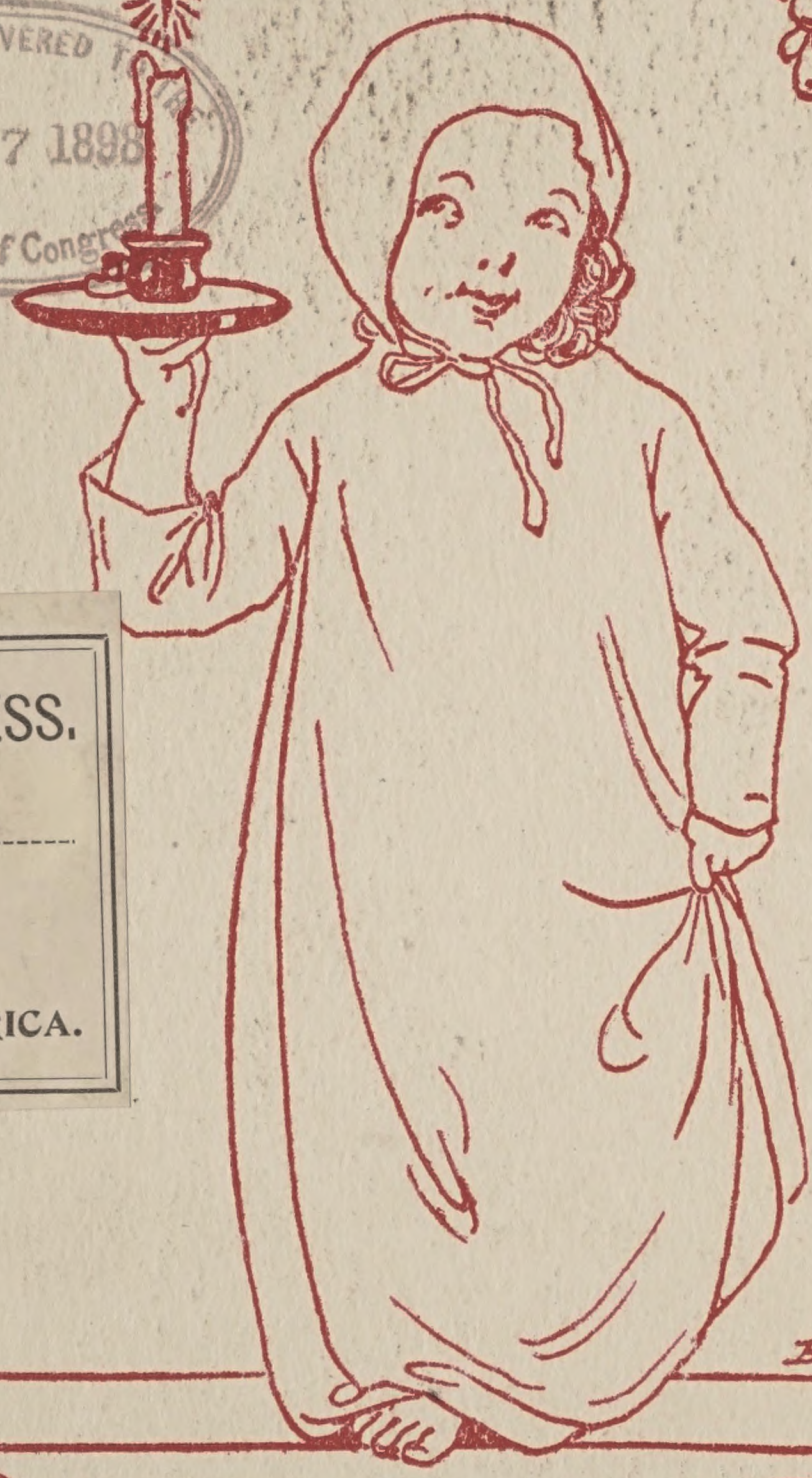

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Stories to Tell To Children

Told in the Twilight

Blanche McManus '98

Stories to Tell To Children—

TOLD IN THE TWILIGHT.

Undine.

TOLD IN THE TWILIGHT

Stories to tell to Children.

With Picturings

By BLANCHE McMANUS

E. R. HERRICK & COMPANY

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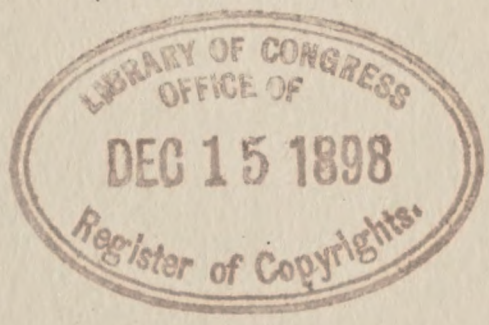

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TOLD IN THE TWILIGHT.

UNDINE, THE WATER MAID, WHO WEDDED A MORTAL.

Who was Undine? Why, just the most beautiful Rhine maiden who ever existed, but she wanted to be a mortal and to leave the lovely caves below the waters and become a commonplace human being. So her great uncle Kühleborn, who was ruler of the spirits of the waters, made a mighty storm, and Undine, in the shape of a tiny baby, was washed to the shore of a lake, where the old fisher people who had lost their own child adopted her.

As a little girl Undine often amazed her foster parents by her queer sayings and doings. She would play among the waves of the lake, and often would mysteriously disappear for days at a time.

Now when she had grown up, a knight rode through the forest and stopped with the old fisher people, and that night another storm rose, and the lake burst its bound and encircled the house, so that they were cut off

from land, and saw no way ever to rejoin the rest of the world. A priest was wrecked below their hut, and the next day Huldbrand, the knight, married Undine, who at once became mortal—the sweetest, gentlest, loveliest bride knight ever had. Then the lake sank down to its usual size, and straightway the knight bore off his bride. But Kühleborn followed them through the forest—now as a brook, and then as a waterfall—always near to watch over Undine. For a long time they were very happy; but a lady at the court, Bertalda, had loved the knight herself before ever he met Undine, and still loved him; so she did her best to persuade him that the fair Undine was a witch. Undine thought that a person who was so cruel must be unhappy, and thought it was because she was an orphan, so she found out through the water-fairies that Bertalda was the lost daughter of the fisher-folk, her foster parents, and sent for them. But Bertalda was furious at being discovered to be a peasant, and hated Undine still more, and did more to set Huldbrand against his bride. Now Undine knew if her husband was cruel to her or loved another, she would have to kill him and rejoin the water-people; so she did her best by loving ways to inspire him with faith, but he grew more and more suspicious, especially when Undine had the great well of the castle covered with a huge stone, for she feared lest Huldbrand's treatment would cause the Rhine

fairies, who could only enter the castle by that spring, to do him injury.

Afterwards, much against her wish, she went with her knight, and Bertalda, for a tour on the Rhine. And here one day her husband called her a witch, and in a violent rage bade her go back to her people; so she vanished over the side of the boat and melted like water into the stream.

Huldbrand grieved bitterly, but after a while was comforted by Bertalda's love, and married her. The new bride, eager to display her power, ordered the castle well to be uncovered, when a pillar of water rose, that changed into the form of Undine, who, wringing her hands, walked to Huldbrand's chamber, where they found him dead in her arms. They buried him, and a bubbling spring gushed from the turf by his grave, encircling it ere it flowed into the lake. Thus does Undine still hold her loved knight in her embrace.

RIP VAN WINKLE AND HIS LONG NAP.

Past New York, right up the Hudson River, you come to great mountains—called the Catskills—which are otherwise known as the "Kaatsberg." Long ago there lived in a village, at the foot of one of these tree-clad hills, a Dutchman named Rip Van Winkle, who had a wife, a grumbling, bad-tempered woman; a son, a young Rip; and a blue-eyed daughter, whom he loved dearly. The old Rip was a lazy, good-natured fellow, fond of sitting outside the village inn and gossiping in the shade beneath the sign-board which bore a portrait of King George III., for America was then an English colony. One summer evening when poor Rip Van Winkle had been scolded by his wife, who had routed him out of his favorite seat, he scrambled up the mountain for peace and quiet with his dog and his gun, and threw himself on a green knoll, and dozed.

He was aroused by hearing some one call "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" His dog Wolf growled and skulked to his master's side, as a curious dwarf approached them carrying a keg of liquor on his shoulders; he made

Rip Van Winkle.

signs for Rip to help him carry his burden up the mountain, and they climbed in silence, broken only by long rolling peals like distant thunder, until they came to an open space, where Rip saw a company of odd-looking personages playing at nine-pins. They were dressed in short doublets, with great knives stuck in their belts, and wore enormous breeches, each had a long beard and a queue, and each wore a high-pointed hat, with a crown like a sugar-loaf and a broad brim. By and by they induced Rip to join them, and he found the noise he had taken for thunder was caused by their balls as they rolled along the mountain sides. After awhile they offered him a flagon of hollands, which he drank and fell down in a deep sleep.

When he woke it was bright sunshine, his first thought was, What excuse shall I make to Dame Winkle? He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean, well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock, its barrel crusted with rust, its lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. Wolf was gone, nor in spite of his whistling could he bring him back. As he clambered down toward the village, the people he met seemed dressed in a different fashion from that he had known, and they all stared at him and stroked their chins. As Rip did the same he found he had a beard a foot long. He approached his house, it had fallen into ruins; a half-starved dog snarled

at him, and Rip was sad to find that Wolf, as he thought, had forgotten him. He called for his wife, but no answer came. So he strolled on to the village inn, but in place of the quiet little house, he found a great building with a flag of stars and stripes fluttering above it, and a sign with a head, entitled "General Washington." He asked in vain for his old friends. "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?" he shouted.

"Oh, yes, there he is," said two or three voices at once, and he looked up and saw a man exactly like he was when he went up the mountain.

Then he saw a comely woman, and as she spoke to her little boy, "Hush, Rip, the old man won't hurt you," he seemed to know her voice. "What was your father's name?" he said.

"Ah, poor man, Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and has never been heard of since his dog came home without him."

"Where is your mother?" he asked.

"She died some time ago," she replied.

"I am your father," the poor man said; and then a very old woman came forward and said:

"Sure enough it's Rip Van Winkle himself. Well, old neighbor, where have you been these twenty years?"

But nobody believed the story he told, yet they were

kind to him, and he soon grew very happy, for there was no cross Dame Van Winkle to worry him; and if any one wants to know more about him, a famous writer named Washington Irving has told the story much better than it is told here in his "Sketch-Book."

THE SWINEHERD.

THERE was once a poor prince; he had a kingdom that was very small; still it was quite large enough to marry upon; and he wished to marry.

It was certainly rather cool of him to say to the emperor's daughter, "Will you have me?" But so he did; for his name was renowned far and wide; and there was a hundred princesses who would have answered, "Thank you." But see what she said. Now we will hear.

By the grave of the prince's father there grew a rose tree—a most beautiful rose tree; it blossomed only once in every five years, and even then bore only one flower, but that was a rose that smelled so sweet as to make one forget all cares and sorrows.

And furthermore, the prince had a nightingale, who could sing in such a manner that it seemed as though all sweet melodies dwelt in her little throat. So the princess was to have the rose and the nightingale; and they were accordingly put into large silver caskets, and sent to her.

The emperor had them brought into a large hall, where the princess was playing at "making calls," with the ladies of the court; they never did anything else, and when she saw the caskets with the presents, she clapped her hands for joy.

The Swineherd.

"Ah, if it were but a little pussy-cat!" exclaimed she; then out came the beautiful rose.

"Oh, how prettily it is made!" said all the court ladies.

"It is more than pretty," said the emperor; "it is charming!"

But the princess touched it, and was almost ready to cry.

"Fie, papa!" said she, "it is not made at all; it is natural!"

"Fie!" cried all the court ladies; "it is natural!"

"Let us see what is in the other casket, before we get into a bad humor, proposed the emperor. So the nightingale came forth and sang so delightfully that at first no one could say anything ill-humored of it.

"*Superbe! charmant!*" exclaimed the ladies; for they all used to chatter French, each worse than her neighbor.

"How much the bird reminds me of the musical box that belonged to our blessed empress!" remarked an old knight.

"Ah yes!" said the emperor, and he wept like a little child.

"I will still hope that it is not a real bird," said the princess.

"Yet it is a real bird," said those who had brought it.

"Well, then let the bird fly," returned the princess; and she positively refused to see the prince.

However, he was not to be discouraged; he daubed his face over brown and black, pulled his cap over his ears, and knocked at the door.

"Good-day, emperor!" said he. "Can I have employment at the palace?"

"Oh, there are so many that want a place!" said the emperor; "well, let me see, I want some one to take care of the pigs, for we have a great many of them."

So the prince was appointed "Imperial Swineherd." He had a dirty little room close by the pigsty; and there he sat the whole day and worked. By the evening he had made a pretty little saucepan. Little bells were hung all around it; and when the pot was boiling, these bells tinkled in the most charming manner, and played the old melody:

"Ah! thou dearest Augustine!
All is gone, gone, gone!"

But what was still more curious, whoever held his finger in the smoke of this saucepan immediately smelled all the dishes that were cooking on every hearth in the city: this, you see, was something quite different from the rose.

Now the princess happened to walk that way: and when she heard the tune, she stood quite still, and seemed pleased; for she could play "Dearest Augustine;" and it

was the only piece she knew, and she played it with one finger.

"Why, there is my piece!" said the princess; "that swineherd must certainly have been well educated! Here! Go in and ask him the price of the instrument."

And so one of the court ladies must run in; however, she drew on wooden slippers first.

"What will you take for the saucepan?" inquired the lady.

"I will have ten kisses from the princess," said the swineherd.

"Mercy on us!" said the lady.

"Yes, I cannot sell it for less," said the swineherd.

"Well, what does he say?" asked the princess.

"I cannot tell you, really," replied the lady; "it is too bad!"

"Then you can whisper it!" So the lady whispered it.

"He is an impudent fellow!" said the princess, and she walked on; but when she had gone a little way, the bells tinkled so prettily:

"Ah! thou dearest Augustine!
All is gone, gone, gone!"

"Stay," said the princess. "Ask him if he will have ten kisses from the ladies of my court."

"No, thank you!" answered the swineherd: "ten

kisses from the princess, or I keep the saucepan myself."

"That must not be, either!" said the princess; "but do you all stand before me, that no one may see us."

And the court ladies placed themselves in front of her, and spread out their dresses; and so the swineherd got ten kisses, and she got the saucepan.

It was delightful! the saucepan was kept boiling all the evening and the whole of the following day. They knew perfectly well what was cooking at every fire throughout the city, from the chamberlain's to the cobbler's; the court ladies danced and clapped their hands.

"We know who has soup and who has pancakes for dinner to-day, who has cutlets, and who has eggs. How interesting!"

And "How interesting!" said the lord steward's wife.

"Yes, but keep my secret, for I am an emperor's daughter."

"Mercy on us," said they all.

The swineherd—that is to say the prince, for no one knew that he was other than an ill-favored swineherd—let not a day pass without working at something; he at last constructed a rattle, which, when it was swung round, played all the waltzes and jig-tunes which have ever been heard since the creation of the world.

"Ah, that is *superbe!*" said the princess when she passed by; "I have never heard prettier compositions!

Go in and ask him the price of the instrument; but I won't kiss him!"

"He will have a hundred kisses from the princess!" said the court lady who had been in to ask.

"I think he is crazy!" said the princess, and walked on; but when she had gone a little way, she stopped again. "One must encourage art," said she; "I am the emperor's daughter. Tell him he shall, as on yesterday, have ten kisses from me, and the rest from the ladies of the court."

"Oh! but we should not like that at all!" said the court ladies.

"What are you muttering?" asked the princess: "if I can kiss him, surely you can! Remember, I give you your food and wages." So the court ladies were obliged to go to him again.

"A hundred kisses from the princess!" said he, "or else let every one keep his own."

"Stand round!" said she; and all the ladies stood round her whilst the kissing was going on.

"What can be the reason for such a crowd close by the pigsty?" said the emperor, who happened just then to step out on the balcony. He rubbed his eyes and put on his spectacles. "They are the ladies of the court; there is some play going on. I must go down and see what they are about!" So he pulled up his slippers at the heel, for he had trodden them down.

Hey there! what a hurry he is in.

As soon as he had got into the courtyard he moved very softly, and the ladies were so much engrossed with counting the kisses, that all might go on fairly, that they did not perceive the emperor. He rose on his tip-toes.

"What is all this?" said he, when he saw what was going on, and he boxed the princess' ears with his slipper, just as the swineherd was taking the eighty-sixth kiss.

"Off with you!" cried the emperor, for he was very angry; and both princess and swineherd were thrust out of the city.

The princess now stood and wept, the swineherd scolded, and the rain poured down.

"Oh, how miserable I am!" said the princess. "If I had but married the handsome young prince! Ah! how unfortunate I am!"

And the swineherd went behind a tree, washed the black-and-brown color from his face, threw off his dirty clothes, and stepped forth in his princely robes; he looked so noble that the princess could not help bowing before him.

"I am come to despise thee," said he. "Thou wouldst not have an honorable prince! thou couldst not prize the rose and the nightingale, but thou wast ready to kiss the

swineherd for the sake of a trumpery plaything. Now thou hast thy deserts!"

He then went back to his own little kingdom, and shut the door of his palace in her face. Now she might well sing:

"Ah! thou dearest Augustine!
All is gone, gone, gone!"

—*Hans Christian Andersen.*

DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT.

In the reign of King Edward the Third there lived in a small country village a poor couple, named Whittington, who had a son called Dick. His parents dying when he was very young, he could scarcely remember them at all; and as he was not old enough to work, he was for a long time very badly off, until a kind but poor old woman took compassion on him, and made her little cottage his home. She always gave him good advice, made him industrious and well behaved, and he became quite a favorite in the village.

At fourteen he had grown up to be a stout, good-looking lad, and the good old woman dying, he had to look out for himself. He had heard much about the wonderful city of London; and he felt very curious to go there, and see it with his own eyes; hoping in so great and wealthy a place he should get on better than he could in a poor country village.

On a fine summer's morning he boldly started on his journey, with but a trifle of money in his pocket. When he had walked on for some hours, he felt extremely tired, and was rather alarmed as to how he was to get over the long journey. Soon a heavy wagon advancing along

Dick Whittington.

the road to London was overtaken. Dick, without much ado, told the wagoner his plan, and begged him for a lift until he was sufficiently rested to allow him to walk again. This was agreed to, and so, partly by riding, and partly by walking side by side with the wagoner, Dick managed to reach the great city.

His heart beat with joy at being really in London, but he was a little disappointed. He had fancied a grander and richer sort of place than it first seemed to him. A very common mistake, indeed.

After Dick had parted with the wagoner, he had only a groat left of his money; a night's lodging and a scanty meal exhausted this, and after wandering for a whole day, and feeling so weary and faint from fatigue and hunger, he threw himself down in a doorway, and slept soundly until morning. On awakening and observing on the door above him a curious-looking knocker, he thought there could be no great harm if he lifted the knocker, and waited to see who should appear.

The house belonged to a worthy merchant of the name of Fitzwarren, who had a daughter called Alice, of about the same age as Dick. A sour-looking, ill-tempered woman opened the door, and seeing it was a poor worn-out-looking country lad who had disturbed her breakfast, she began to abuse him roughly and to order him away. Luckily, Mr. Fitzwarren, who was a benevolent, courteous

gentleman, came up to the door at this moment, and listened attentively to the poor lad's story; and being struck with its truthful aspect, he kindly ordered Dick to be taken into the house, and cared for until he should be able to get his living decently.

Alice overheard all this, and did all she could to save Dick from the ill-will and harsh treatment of the cook. Her parents agreed Dick should remain in the house if he would make himself useful. This, however, was not easy, for the cook never liked the boy, and took every opportunity to spite him. She made him sleep on a wretched hard bed, in an old loft, infested with rats and mice. Dick dared not to complain; so he bore with this trouble as long as he could, and resolved at length, when he should have money enough, to buy himself a cat.

A very few days from this, a poor woman passing by the door offered to sell him a cat for a penny. Dick took his prize up to his loft, and kept her in an old wicker basket out of the cook's sight, as he feared she would do the cat a mischief. Now and then he would take Pussy with him when he went out on errands, so that they soon became great friends. Pussy was a capital mouser, and very soon got rid of the rats and mice, and was very clever and quick in learning many tricks that her master taught her.

One day, when Dick was amusing himself with her

antics, he was surprised by Alice, who became as fond of the cat as Dick was himself. This young lady always remained the poor lad's friend, and cheered him up under the hard usage of the cook, who ofttimes beat him severely. Alice was not beautiful, but, what was of greater real value, she was truly amiable in disposition, and had the most agreeable manners. It was no wonder, then, that Whittington, smarting under ill-treatment, should regard his kind young mistress as an angel; while the modesty of the youth, his correct conduct, his respectful demeanor, and his love of truth, interested Alice so much in his behalf, that she persuaded her father to let him be taught to write—for he could already read. The progress he made in this, and in acquiring further knowledge, was astonishing.

Mr. Fitzwarren was a merchant; and it was his custom, whenever one of his ships went out, to call his family and ask them all in turn to make a little venture or speculation under charge of the captain. Poor Whittington was absent when this next happened; he, poor fellow, felt ashamed that he possessed nothing of value to send as his venture. But he was called for, and told that he must produce something—no matter what—to try his luck. He then burst into tears, from very vexation and shame, when Alice whispered in his ear, "Send your cat, Dick," and forthwith he was ordered to take Pussy, his faithful

friend and companion, on board, and place her in the hands of the captain. The mouser's good qualities were made known to the captain, so that he might make the most of her for Dick's benefit.

After his loss Dick felt rather sorrowful, and this was not lessened by the taunts and jeers of his old enemy, the cook, who used to tease him constantly about his "fine venture," and the great fortune he was to make by it. Poor fellow! she led him a miserable life; and as his young mistress, besides, was soon after absent from home on a visit, he lost heart entirely, and could no longer bear to live in the same house with his tormentor.

So he resolved to quit Mr. Fitzwarren's house, and started off accordingly one morning very early, unobserved by any one, and wandered to the foot of Highgate Hill. Tired and wretched, he flung himself upon a large stone by the roadside, which is called Whittington's Stone to this day. He presently sank into a sort of doze, from which he was roused by the sound of Bow bells, that began to ring a peal, as it was Allhallows Day. As he listened he fancied he could make out the following words:

"Turn Again, Whittington,
Lord Mayor of London."

A hope was awakened within him as he kept repeating these words after the bells. So distinctly did they appear

to be addressed to him, that he was resolved to bear any hardships rather than check his way to fortune by idle repining. So he made the best of his way home again. Luckily he got into the house without his absence having been noticed.

He exerted himself now more than ever to make himself useful, especially to his worthy master and young mistress, and succeeded beyond his expectation; almost everybody saw that he tried to do his duty, and to excel in all he attempted to do. Alice was more and more satisfied, and heard with pleasure of the great progress he was making in his studies. But the cook continued as surly as ever.

Mr. Fitzwarren's ship, the "Unicorn," was all this time slowly pursuing her voyage to Africa. In those days navigation was but little understood, and much greater dangers were incurred through ignorance than is now the case. The "Unicorn" was unlucky and met with much foul weather, and was so tossed about that she lost her reckoning; but what was worse, owing to her being so long away, her provisions were nearly exhausted, and all on board began to despair of ever returning to England. All through this dreadful period Whittington's cat was kept alive and well, and this no doubt was owing to the great care taken of her by the captain himself, who had not forgotten the interest Alice had expressed to him about the cat. Pussy was thus preserved from death and

contrived to bring up a little family of kittens during the voyage: their funny tricks greatly diverted the sailors, and helped to keep them in good humor when they began to feel discontented.

One day land was descried and proved to be a wealthy kingdom of Africa. The inhabitants, who were copper-colored, were hospitable, and much pleased to be visited by the ships of white men. The King, as soon as he heard of the arrival of the "Unicorn," sent some of his great men to invite the captain and a few of his companions to visit his Court, and to dine with him and his Queen.

A grand dinner, in the fashion of the country, was provided; and great good humor and cordiality prevailed until the dishes were placed on the table, when the white visitors were astonished at the appearance of rats and mice in vast numbers, which came from their hiding-places, and devoured nearly all the viands in a very short time. The King and Queen seemed to regard this as no uncommon event, although they felt quite ashamed it should occur at this time.

When the captain found that there was no such animal as a cat known in the country, he thought of asking permission to introduce Whittington's cat at Court, feeling convinced that Pussy would soon get rid of the abominable rats and mice that infested it. The royal

pair and the whole Court listened to the account of the cat's qualities as a mouser with wonder and delight, and were impatient to see her talents put to proof. Puss was accordingly taken ashore, and a fresh repast having been prepared, which, on being served up was about to be attacked in a similar way to the previous one, she sprang in a moment among the crowd of rats and mice, killing several, and putting the rest to flight in less than the space of a minute.

Nothing could exceed the satisfaction caused by this event. The King and Queen and all the courtiers did not know how to make enough of Pussy, and they became more and more fond of her when they found how gentle and playful she could be. The captain was much pressed to leave this valuable cat with his black friends, and he, thinking that they would no doubt make a right royal return for so precious a gift, readily acceded. The Queen's attachment to Puss knew no bounds, and she felt great alarm lest any accident should befall her, fearing that in that case the odious rats and mice would return more ferocious than ever.

The Queen had a tender heart, and when she had heard from the captain all the particulars of Whittington's story, and of the poor lad's great regret at parting with his cat, she felt quite loth to deprive him of his favorite, especially when Pussy's kittens, which had also

been brought from the ship, were found to be quite able to frighten away the rats and mice. So the cat was taken on board again. The gratitude of the King and Queen for the important services rendered by Pussy and her family was manifested in the rich treasures they sent to Whittington as the owner of the wonderful cat.

The captain, having completed his business and refitted his ship as well, took leave of his African friends, and set sail for England; and after a very long voyage safely arrived in London. When the captain called upon the merchant, the latter was very curious to hear of the perils encountered and the strange sights witnessed by the captain. Alice, in particular, wanted to know what had befallen Dick's cat, and what was the success of his venture. When the captain had explained all, he added that Whittington ought to be told very cautiously, otherwise his good luck might make him lose his wits. But Mr. Fitzwarren would hear of no delay, and had him sent for at once.

Poor Dick at that moment had just been basted by the cook with a ladle of dripping, and was quite ashamed to appear in such a plight before company. But all his woes were soon forgotten when the merchant told him of his good fortune, and especially when he added that it was a just reward granted by Heaven for his patience under hard trials, and for his good conduct and industry.

When the boxes and bales containing the treasures given by the King and Queen to the owner of the cat, and marked outside with a large W, were displayed, the astonished youth burst into tears, and implored his master to take all if he would, but continue to be his friend. But the merchant would touch none of it, declaring it to belong to Whittington, and to him alone.

Before the captain took his leave, he said to Dick playfully, "I have another present for you from the African Queen," and calling to a sailor, ordered him to bring up Puss, which was done to the great joy of her former master; and right happy was she to see him again, purring round him, and rubbing her head against his face when he took her up in his arms. For the rest of her days she continued to live with her grateful master.

Dick made a liberal and proper use of his wealth. Mr. Fitzwarren constantly refused Whittington's earnest wishes that he would accept at least some of his great wealth, but he agreed to become his guardian and the manager of his property until he should be of age. Under his prudent counsel Whittington grew up to be a thriving merchant, and a wise and good citizen. With all this success he never lost his old modesty of behavior; and deeply as he loved Alice, he for a long time delayed to make his secret known to her father; but the kind merchant had long suspected the fact, and at last taxed

Richard with it. He could not deny it, but found he had no cause to regret having opened his heart to Mr. Fitzwarren. On Whittington's coming of age, he was rewarded with the hand of Alice, who fully shared his love, having long secretly regarded him with favor.

Whittington rose in eminence every year, and was universally esteemed. He served in Parliament, was knighted also, and was thrice Lord Mayor of London; thus fulfilling the prophecy uttered, as he had fancied, by Bow bells. When he served that office for the third time, it was during the reign of Harry the Fifth, just after that great king had conquered France. Sir Richard entertained him and his Queen in such great style that the King was pleased to say, "Never prince had such a subject!"to which it has been said the Lord Mayor loyally replied, "Never subject had such a prince!"

At this entertainment the King was much pleased with a fire made from choice woods and fragrant spices, upon which Sir Richard said he would add something that would make the fire burn more brightly for the pleasure of his sovereign, when he threw into the flames various bonds given by the King for money borrowed of the citizens to carry on the war with France, and which Sir Richard had called in and discharged, to the amount of sixty thousand pounds—to the admiration of all who witnessed this act of patriotic generosity.

After a long life, this good man, who nobly distinguished himself by public works and acts of charity—by many of which he is still kept in memory—died, universally regretted, having survived Alice, his wife, about twenty years.

THE DRAGON OF WANTLEY.

Old stories tell how Hercules
A dragon slew at Lerna,
With seven heads and fourteen eyes,
To see and well discern-a:
But he had a club, this dragon to drub,
Or he ne'er had done it, I warrant ye:
But More of More-hall, with nothing at all,
He slew the dragon of Wantley.

This dragon had two furious wings,
Each one upon each shoulder;
With a sting in his tail as long as a flail,
Which made him bolder and bolder.
He had long claws, and in his jaws
Four and forty teeth of iron;
With a hide as tough as any buff,
Which did him round environ.

Have you not heard how the Trojan horse
Held seventy men in his belly?
This dragon was not quite so big,
But very near, I'll tell ye;

The Dragon of Wantley.

Devoured he poor children three,
That could not with him grapple;
And at one sup he ate them up,
As one would eat an apple.

All sorts of cattle this dragon would eat,
Some say he ate up trees,
And that the forests sure he would
Devour up by degrees:
For houses and churches were to him geese and turkeys;
He ate all and left none behind,
But some stones, dear Jack, that he could not crack,
Which on the hills you will find.

Hard by a furious knight there dwelt;
Men, women, girls, and boys,
Sighing and sobbing, came to his lodging,
And made a hideous noise.
Oh, save us all, More of More-hall,
Thou peerless knight of these woods;
Do but slay this dragon, who won't leave us a rag on,
We'll give thee all our goods.

This being done, he did engage
To hew the dragon down;
But first he went new armor to
Bespeak at Sheffield town;

With spikes all about, not within but without,
Of steel so sharp and strong,
Both behind and before, arms, legs, and all o'er,
Some five or six inches long.

Had you but seen him in this dress,
How fierce he looked, and how big,
You would have thought him for to be
Some Egyptian porcupig:
He frighted all, cats, dogs, and all,
Each cow, each horse, and each hog:
For fear they did flee, for they took him to be
Some strange, outlandish hedge-hog.

To see this fight all people then
Got up on trees and houses,
On churches some, and chimneys too;
But these put on their trousers,
Not to spoil their hose. As soon as he rose,
To make him strong and mighty,
He drank, by the tale, six pots of ale
And a quart of aqua-vitæ.

It is not strength that always wins,
For wit doth strength excel;
Which made our cunning champion
Creep down into a well,

Where he did think this dragon would drink,
And so he did in truth;
And as he stooped low, he rose up and cried, boh!
And kicked him in the mouth.

Oh, quoth the dragon with a deep sigh,
And turned six times together.
Sobbing and tearing, cursing and swearing
Out of his throat of leather:
More of More-hall, O thou rascal,
Would I had seen thee never;
With the thing at thy foot thou hast pricked my throat,
And I'm quite undone forever.

Murder, murder, the dragon cried,
Alack, alack, for grief;
Had you but missed that place, you could
Have done me no mischief.
Then his head he shaked, trembled and quaked,
And down he laid and cried;
First on one knee, then on back tumbled he;
So groaned, and kicked, and died.

A VOYAGE TO FAIRYLAND.

Dora closed the book she had been reading with a slightly impatient gesture, as it was now growing quite dark. "I don't believe there are fairies and things *really*," she said aloud, although there was no one else in the room, as she placed her chin on her hand and gazed abstractedly into the nursery fire. Now Dora loved fairies and fairy tales, but she had just finished reading such a particularly choice one that, growing somewhat envious of the good life the fairies led, she had given vent to this skeptical remark to ease her feelings. The lights had not yet been brought in, and the flicker of the fire threw fantastic shifting shadows on the walls and floor.

When Dora expressed her disbelief in "fairies and things," it must not be supposed that she dismissed them from her mind. Oh, no! her thoughts were very busy now; and, gazing intently into the dancing flames, she there discovered all sorts of lovely fairy corners. Goblins skipped about and danced in rare abandon, while dainty little fairies with bright hair and smiling faces, and clothed in flower petals, strolled about in a manner most sedate and queenly for people so very small. Her attention was strangely attracted by a number of goblins

A Voyage to Fairyland.

dancing wildly, with hands clasped, round a timid little fairy, who seemed greatly amused and somewhat embarrassed. Quickly and more quickly they went round, until the rate was really dazzling, and Dora trembled lest one of them should tumble or let go. "There! I thought so," she cried excitedly, with a start; "I knew you would do that;" for one of them had broken loose and been hurled right out of the circle on to Dora's shoulder, where he lay gasping like a fish out of water.

"Here's a go," said the goblin at last, in a funny squeaky little voice, as he crouched there and hung on to her pretty auburn hair. Dora gazed at him with open-mouthed astonishment, as with eager eyes fixed on hers, he commenced gingerly to climb down her arm on to the rug.

"I hope I haven't hurt you," he continued, "but it wasn't my fault exactly; you see——"

"Don't trouble to explain," said Dora, who was growing accustomed to the situation. "I saw it all. You're a fairy, aren't you?" she added abruptly.

"You put it rather bluntly, but I suppose I am," returned the goblin, who had now reached the rug, and was leaning against Dora's knee; "but there! I must be going."

"Where?" asked Dora.

"Back," replied the goblin, jerking his head over his shoulder as an accompaniment to his rather vague answer.

"Please be a little more definite; where s 'back?'"

"Oh, Fairyland, you know."

"Then take me with you, please; I'll be *so* good," cried Dora, so suddenly that it made the goblin jump.

"Well, you're rather a lot to look after, but come along," he replied; and taking her by the hand they vanished through the wall in a twinkling.

Dora was not surprised or startled, somehow, even when she observed that she now appeared no bigger than her companion, for she had something else to wonder at. They were standing amid a mass of lovely many-colored flowers, with everything around bright and dazzling. The sun was shining in a deep blue sky, while along the flowery slopes, across a belt of yellow sand, lay the sea, shimmering in the sunlight.

"Oh, how lovely!" cried Dora, clasping her hands. "Is this Fairyland?"

"Oh, dear no; Fairyland is over there," replied her companion, pointing across the shining water. "This is only one of the branches, so to speak."

They glided across the smooth sand down to the water's edge.

"How are we going to get there?" Dora remarked.

"Well, I think I'd better call a ship," he said; and holding up his hand and giving a low whistle, a queer-looking ship approached them.

When Dora got on board she found several other children there who were about to make the same voyage. Slowly they sailed across the harbor into the open sea. Dora was lost in enchantment. The water was divided into bands of purple and blue, and gray and green; and the deep blue of the sky was made to appear more intense by little fleecy white clouds blown by gentle zephyrs across the sky, while right in the midst of a purple stretch of water nestled a group of golden-rimmed islands like jewels in their settings.

"What glorious color!" exclaimed Dora under her breath to her companion.

"Yes, it isn't bad; but you see I get it every day," he added, noticing the reproach in her eyes; and with this he left her and went below.

Birds of gay plumage darted in front of them, and seemed to disappear into the little white blotches of surf that the sea was flecked with. Amid the sighing of the winds and she splashing of the water, as the ship plowed on, Dora thought she distinguished the sound of faint music, and looking intently in front, she perceived that what at first she had taken to be a gathering of mist had resolved itself into two fairy figures playing on fairy instruments and singing softly. As they proceeded, the music grew more distinct and more lovely, and Dora was quite carried out of herself. She was brought back,

however, by the little man, who had returned, and was digging her in the side.

"You see, we don't steer our ships as you do in your world; we are drawn to our destination by the music of Fairyland."

"How sweet," murmured Dora; and looking over the side she saw lovely mermaids with golden hair besporting themselves in the blue; she was sure also she could see little fairies riding on the tops of the waves. The coast of Fairyland appeared very distinct now, and the music which filled the air was loud and sweet. On a little promontory stood a crowd of dainty people in dresses of flowers waiting to receive the voyagers. Sweetly they smiled on Dora as she stepped ashore, and Dora could hardly keep the tears back for very joy. Soon the crowd of fairies divided, and coming toward her appeared the Queen more radiant than them all; and as she took Dora by the hand, the music, which had been growing continually louder and more sweet, burst into a flood of melody. But then, as the face of the Queen drew near to Dora's to kiss her, the joy became so intense that she must have swooned, for everything seemed to fade right away, and then—— "Come, you must go to bed, dear," said a voice in her ear. Dora had awakened in nurse's arms.

ALFRED JONES.

The Ugly Duckling.

THE UGLY DUCKLING.

It was so glorious out in the country; it was summer; the cornfields were yellow, the oats were green, the hay had been put up in stacks in the green meadows, and the stork went about on his long red legs, and chattered Egyptian, for this was the language he had learned from his good mother. All around the fields and meadows were great forests, and in the midst of these forests lay deep lakes. Yes, it was right glorious out in the country. In the midst of the sunshine there lay an old farm, with deep canals about it, and from the wall down to the water grew great burdocks, so high that little children could stand upright under the loftiest of them. It was just as wild there as in the deepest wood, and here sat a Duck upon her nest; she had to hatch her ducklings; but she was almost tired out before the little ones came, and then she so seldom had visitors. The other ducks liked better to swim about in the canals than to run up to sit down under a burdock, and cackle with her.

At last one eggshell after another burst open. "Piep! piep!" it cried, and in all the eggs there were little creatures that stuck out their heads.

"Quack! quack!" they said; and they all came quack-

ing out as fast as they could, looking all round them under the green leaves; and the mother let them look as much as they chose, for green is good for the eye.

"How wide the world is!" said all the young ones, for they certainly had much more room now than when they were in the eggs.

"D'ye think this is all the world?" said the mother. "That stretches far across the other side of the garden, quite into the parson's field; but I have never been there yet. I hope you are all together," and she stood up. "No, I have not all. The largest egg still lies there. How long is that to last? I am really tired of it." And she sat down again.

"Well, how goes it?" asked an old Duck who had come to pay her a visit.

"It lasts a long time with that one egg," said the Duck who sat there. "It will not burst. Now, only look at the others; are they not the prettiest little ducks one could possibly see? They are all like their father: the rogue, he never comes to see me."

"Let me see the egg which will not burst," said the old visitor. "You may be sure it is a turkey's egg. I was once cheated in that way, and had much anxiety and trouble with the young ones, for they are afraid of the water. Must I say it to you, I could not get them to venture in. I quacked and I clacked, but it was no use.

Let me see the egg. Yes, that's a turkey's egg. Let it lie there, and teach the other children to swim."

"I think I will sit on it a little longer," said the Duck. "I've sat so long now that I can sit a few days more."

"Just as you please," said the old Duck; and she went away.

At last the great egg burst. "Piep! piep!" said the little one, and crept forth. It was very large and very ugly. The Duck looked at it.

"It's a very large duckling," said she; "none of the others look like that: can it really be a turkey chick? Well, we shall soon find out. It must go into the water, even if I have to thrust it in myself?"

The next day it was bright, beautiful weather; the sun shone on all the green trees. The Mother-Duck went down to the canal with all her family. Splash! she jumped into the water. "Quack! quack!" she said, and one duckling after another plunged in. The water closed over their heads, but they came up in an instant and swam capitally; their legs went of themselves, and they were all in the water. The ugly gray Duckling swam with them.

"No, it's not a turkey," said she; "look how well it can use its legs, and how straight it holds itself. It is my own child! On the whole it's quite pretty, if one looks at it rightly. Quack! quack! come with me and

I'll lead you out into the great world, and present you in the duckyard; but keep close to me, so that no one may tread on you, and take care of the cats!"

And so they came into the duckyard. There was a terrible riot going on in there, for two families were quarreling about an eel's head, and the cat got it after all.

"See, that's how it goes in the world!" said the Mother-Duck; and she whetted her beak, for she too wanted the eel's head. "Only use your legs." she said. "See that you can bustle about, and bow your heads before the old Duck yonder. She's the grandest of all here; she's of Spanish blood—that's why she's so fat; and d'ye see? she has a red rag round her leg; that's something particularly fine, and the greatest distinction a duck can enjoy; it signifies that one does not want to lose her, and that she's to be known by the animals and by men too. Shake yourselves—don't turn in your toes; a well brought-up duck turns its toes quite out, just like father and mother—so! Now bend your necks and say Quack!"

And they did so; but the other ducks round about looked at them and said quite boldly:

"Look there! now we're to have these hanging on, as if there were not enough of us already! And—fie!—how that duckling yonder looks; we won't stand that!" And one duck flew up at it, and bit it in the neck.

"Let it alone," said the mother: "it does no harm to any one."

"Yes, but it's too large and peculiar," said the Duck who had bitten it; "and therefore it must be put down."

"Those are pretty children that the mother has there," said the old Duck with the rag round her leg. "They're all pretty but that one; that was rather unlucky. I wish she could bear it over again."

"That cannot be done, my lady," replied the Mother-Duck. "It is not pretty, but it has a really good disposition, and swims as well as any other; yes, I may even say it, swims better. I think it will grow up pretty, and become smaller in time; it has lain too long in the egg, and therefore is not properly shaped." And then she pinched it in the neck and smoothed its feathers. "Moreover, it is a drake," she said, and therefore it is not of so much consequence. I think he will be very strong: he makes his way already."

"The other ducklings are graceful enough," said the old Duck. "Make yourself at home, and if you find an eel's head you may bring it me."

And now they were at home. But the poor Duckling which had crept last out of the egg, and looked so ugly, was bitten and pushed and jeered, as much by the ducks as by the chickens.

"It is too big!" they all said. And the turkeycock,

who had been born with spurs, and therefore thought himself an emperor, blew himself up like a ship in full sail, and bore straight down upon it; then he gobbled and grew quite red in the face. The poor Duckling did not know where it should stand or walk; it was quite melancholy because it looked ugly, and was the butt of the whole duckyard.

So it went on the first day; and afterward it became worse and worse. The poor Duckling was hunted about by every one; even its brothers and sisters were quite angry with it, and said: "If the cat would only catch you, you ugly creature!" And the mother said: "If you were only far away!" And the ducks bit it, and the chickens beat it, and the girl who had to feed the poultry kicked at it with her foot.

Then it ran and flew over the fence, and the little birds in the bushes flew up in fear.

"That is because I am so ugly!" thought the Duckling; and it shut its eyes, but flew on farther, and so it came out into the great moor, where the wild ducks lived. Here it lay the whole night long; and it was weary and downcast.

Toward morning the wild ducks flew up and looked at their new companion.

"What sort of a one are you?" they asked; and the Duckling turned in every direction and bowed as well as

it could. "You are remarkably ugly!" said the Wild Ducks. "But that is nothing to us, so long as you do not marry into our family."

Poor thing! it certainly did not think of marrying, and only hoped to obtain leave to lie among the reeds and drink some of the swamp water.

Thus it lay two whole days; then came thither two wild geese, or, properly speaking, two wild ganders. It was not long since each had crept out of an egg, and that's why they were so saucy.

"Listen, comrade," said one of them. "You're so ugly that I like you. Will you go with us, and become a bird of passage? Near here, in another moor, there are a few sweet, lovely wild geese, all unmarried, and all able to say 'Rap?' You've a chance of making your fortune, ugly as you are."

"Piff! paff!" resounded through the air, and the two ganders fell down dead in the swamp, and the water became blood-red. "Piff! paff!" it sounded again, and the whole flock of wild geese rose up from the reeds. And then there was another report. A great hunt was going on. The sportsmen were lying in wait all round the moor, and some were even sitting up in the branches of the trees, which spread far over the reeds. The blue smoke rose up like clouds among the dark trees, and was wafted far away across the water; and the hunting dogs

came—splash, splash!—into the swamp, and the rushes and the reeds bent down on every side. That was a fright for the poor Duckling. It turned its head and put it under its wing; but at that moment a frightful great dog stood close by the Duckling. His tongue hung far out of his mouth, and his eyes gleamed horrible and ugly; he thrust out his nose close against the Duckling, showed his sharp teeth, and—splash, splash!—on he went without seizing it.

"Oh, Heaven be thanked!" sighed the Duckling. "I am so ugly that even the dog does not like to bite me!"

And so it lay quite quiet, while the shots rattled through the reeds, and gun after gun was fired. At last, late in the day, all was still; but the poor Duckling did not dare to rise up; it waited several hours before it looked round, and then hastened away out of the moor as fast as it could. It ran on over field and meadow; there was such a storm raging that it was difficult to get from one place to another.

Toward evening the Duck came to a little miserable peasant's hut. This hut was so dilapidated that it did not itself know on which side it should fall; and that's why it remained standing. The storm whistled round the Duckling in such a way that the poor creature was obliged to sit down to stand against it; and the wind blew worse and worse. Then the Duckling noticed that

one of the hinges of the door had given way, and the door hung so slanting that the Duckling could slip through the crack into the room; and that is what it did.

Here lived a woman, with her Cat and her Hen. And the Cat, whom she call Sonnie, could arch his back and purr; he could even give out sparks; but for that one had to stroke his fur the wrong way. The Hen had quite little, short legs, and therefore she was called Chickabiddy Shortshanks; she laid good eggs, and the woman loved her as her own child.

In the morning the strange Duckling was at once noticed, and the Cat began to purr and the Hen to cluck.

"What's this?" said the woman, and looked all round; but she could not see well, and therefore she thought the Duckling was a fat duck that had strayed. "This is a rare prize!" she said. "Now I shall have duck's eggs. I hope it is not a drake. We must try that."

And so the Duckling was admitted on trial for three weeks; but no eggs came. And the Cat was master of the house, and the Hen was the lady, and always said "We and the World!" for she thought they were half the world, and by far the better half.

The Duckling thought one might have a different opinion, but the Hen would not allow it.

"Can you lay eggs?" she asked.

"No"

"Then will you hold your tongue!"

And the Cat said "Can you curve your back, and purr, and give out sparks?"

"No."

"Then you will please have no opinion of your own when sensible folks are speaking."

And the Duckling sat in a corner and was melancholy; then the fresh air and the sunshine streamed in; and it was seized with such a strange longing to swim on the water that it could not help telling the Hen of it.

"What are you thinking of?" cried the Hen. "You have nothing to do; that's why you have these fancies. Lay eggs, or purr, and they will pass over."

"But it is so charming to swim on the water!" said the Duckling, "so refreshing to let it close above one's head, and to dive down to the bottom."

"Yes, that must be a mighty pleasure, truly," quoth the Hen; "I fancy you must have gone crazy. Ask the Cat about it; he's the cleverest animal I know; ask him if he likes to swim on the water, or to dive down; I won't speak about myself. Ask our mistress, the old woman; no one in the world is cleverer than she. Do you think she has any desire to swim, and to let the water close above her head?"

"You don't understand me," said the Duckling.

"We don't understand you? Then pray who is to

understand you? You surely don't pretend to be cleverer than the Cat and the woman—I won't say anything of myself. Don't be conceited, child, and thank your Maker for all the kindness you have received. Did you not get into a warm room, and have you not fallen into company from which you may learn something? But you are a chatterer, and it is not pleasant to associate with you. You may believe me, I speak for your good. I tell you disagreeable things, and by that one may always know one's true friends! Only take care that you learn to lay eggs, or to purr, and give out sparks!"

"I think I will go out into the wide world," said the Duckling.

"Yes, do go," replied the hen.

And so the Duckling went away. It swam on the water, and dived, but it was slighted by every creature because of its ugliness.

Now came the autumn. The leaves in the forest turned yellow and brown; the wind caught them so that they danced about, and up in the air it was very cold. The clouds hung low, heavy with hail and snowflakes, and on the fence stood the raven, crying, "Croak! croak!" for mere cold; yes, it was enough to make one feel cold to think of this. The poor little Duckling certainly had not a good time. One evening—the sun was just setting in his beauty—there came a whole flock of great. hand-

some birds out of the bushes; they were dazzlingly white, with long, flexible necks; they were swans. They uttered a very peculiar cry, spread forth their glorious great wings, and flew away from that cold region to warmer lands, to fair open lakes. They mounted so high, so high! and the ugly Duckling felt quite strangely as it watched them. It turned round and round in the water like a wheel, stretched out its neck toward them, and uttered such a strange loud cry as frightened itself. Oh! it could not forget those beautiful, happy birds; and so soon as it could see them no longer it dived down to the very bottom, and when it came up again it was quite beside itself. It knew not the name of those birds, and knew not whither they were flying; but it loved them more than it had ever loved any one. It was not at all envious of them. How could it think of wishing to possess such loveliness as they had? It would have been glad if only the ducks would have endured its company—the poor, ugly creature!

And the winter grew cold, very cold! The Duckling was forced to swim about in the water, to prevent the surface from freezing entirely; but every night the hole in which it swam about became smaller and smaller. It froze so hard that the icy covering crackled again; and the Duckling was obliged to use its legs continually to prevent the hole from freezing up. At last it became

exhausted, and lay quite still, and thus froze fast into the ice.

Early in the morning a peasant came by, and when he saw what had happened he took his wooden shoe, broke the ice crust to pieces, and carried the Duckling home to his wife. Then it came to itself again. The children wanted to play with it; but the Duckling thought they wanted to hurt it, and in its terror fluttered up into the milk-pan, so that the milk spurted down into the room. The woman clasped her hands, at which the Duckling flew down into the butter-tub, and then into the meal-barrel and out again. How it looked then! The woman screamed, and struck at it with the fire-tongs; the children tumbled over one another in their efforts to catch the Duckling; and they laughed and they screamed—well it was that the door stood open, and the poor creature was able to slip out between the shrubs into the newly-fallen snow—there it lay quite exhausted.

But it would be too melancholy if I were to tell all the misery and care which the Duckling had to endure in the hard winter. It lay out on the moor among the reeds, when the sun began to shine again and the larks to sing: it was a beautiful spring.

Then all at once the Duckling could flap its wings: they beat the air more strongly than before, and bore it strongly away; and before it well knew how all this

happened it found itself in a great garden, where the elder trees smelled sweet, and bent their long green branches down to the canal that wound through the region. Oh, here it was so beautiful, such a gladness of spring! and from the thicket came three glorious white swans; they rustled their wings and swam lightly on the water. The Duckling knew the splendid creatures, and felt oppressed by a peculiar sadness.

"I will fly away to them, to the royal birds! and they will beat me, because I, that am so ugly, dare to come near them. But it is all the same. Better to be killed by *them* than to be pursued by ducks, and beaten by fowls, and pushed about by the girl who takes care of the poultry yard, and to suffer hunger in winter!" And it flew out into the water, and swam toward the beautiful swans: these looked at it, and came sailing down upon it with outspread wings. "Kill me!" said the poor creature, and bent its head down upon the water, expecting nothing but death. But what was this that it saw in the clear water? It beheld its own image; and, lo! it was no longer a clumsy dark-gray bird, ugly and hateful to look at, but a—swan!

It matters nothing if one is born in a duckyard if one has only lain in a swan's egg.

It felt quite glad at all the need and misfortune it had suffered, now it realized its happiness in all the splendor

that surrounded it. And the great swans swam round it, and stroked it with their beaks.

Into the garden came little children, who threw bread and corn into the water; and the youngest cried, "There is a new one!" and the other children shouted joyously, "Yes, a new one has arrived!" And they clapped their hands and danced about, and ran to their father and mother; and bread and cake were thrown into the water; and they all said: "The new one is the most beautiful of all! so young and handsome!" and the old swans bowed their heads before him. Then he felt quite ashamed, and hid his head under his wings, for he did not know what to do; he was so happy, and yet not at all proud. He thought how he had been persecuted and despised; and now he heard them saying that he was the most beautiful of all birds. Even the elder tree bent its branches straight down into the water before him, and the sun shone warm and mild. Then his wings rustled, he lifted his slender neck, and cried rejoicingly from the depths of his heart:

"I never dreamed of so much happiness when I was the Ugly Duckling!"

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

ROBIN HOOD AND HIS MERRY MEN.

Robin Hood, as we know, dwelt in the Yorkshire Forest of Barnsdale, though in Sherwood Forest he seems to have been at home. One day, this most proud and courteous of outlaws declared that he could not dine till he got some guest who should pay for their cheer. So his faithful followers, Little John, so called in sport because he was seven feet high; Will Scathelock, whom men named also Scarlett, and Much, the miller's sturdy son, he sent out toward Watling Street, that they might perchance make prize of some rich traveler. Then, before long, they fell in with a knight riding through one of the forest glades, yet in little knightly pride, for he sat downcast on his sorry steed, thinly clad, all woe-begone and poverty-stricken of aspect, and wept as he went along.

"A sorrier man than he was one
Rode never in summer's day!"

All the same, Little John knelt courteously to give him his master's pressing invitation, which the knight was nothing loath to accept, saying he had heard much good of Robin Hood. So they all went together to Robin's lodge among the woods, where the hungry outlaw also

Robin Hood.

welcomed his guest with a great show of friendliness, and when they had "washed and wiped together," they sat down to dinner.

A good meal it was, bread and wine in plenty, with venison, swans, pheasants, and every kind of game; and the starveling knight confessed that he had not had such a dinner for three weeks.

"If I come again, Robin,
Here by this country,
As good a dinner I shall thee make
As thou hast made to me."

Robin thanked him, but said that he must now pay before he went, since it was not seemly that a yeoman should be at the cost of entertaining a knight.

Alas! replied the knight, he had no more in the world than ten shillings, which he was ashamed to offer. In that case, declared Robin, he would not take a penny, but would rather lend his guest money, if in need. To make sure, however, he bid Little John examine the knight's mantle, which in those days was a rider's baggage, and, this being spread on the ground, his "coffer" was found to contain no more than half a pound, as he had said.

Robin Hood asked how one of his degree came to be so poor, and heard in reply a moving tale of family misfortune. The knight's son had had the misfortune to kill

a knight of Lancashire, and to get him out of this trouble, the father had been forced to pledge his lands to the rich Abbot of St. Mary. Now the day was at hand on which he must pay up four hundred pounds, or see his inheritance pass into possession of the greedy monks. His friends had all abandoned him in his poverty; they pretended not to know a man at the point of ruin; nobody would lend him money or go bail for him. So he saw nothing for it but to go over the salt sea to Palestine.

"And see where Christ was quick and dead,
On the Mount of Calvary.
Farewell, friend, and have good day—
It may no better be!"

But it was not Robin Hood's way to turn his back on one in distress. Even his men wept for pity of the poor knight; and now, ordering the best wine to be brought out for a guest who could pay only with thanks, their master sent Little John to his treasury for four hundred pounds, which he counted out as a loan, to be repaid that day twelvemonth, under the same greenwood tree, on no other security than the love of Our Lady. Moreover, Robin and his friendly men gave the knight scarlet and green cloth to make a good suit of clothes, and a good horse and a new saddle, and a pair of boots and gilt spurs; and Little John was lent him to go along as squire, since it seemed unbecoming for a knight to ride

without a single attendant. This knight, then, Sir Richard of the Lee by name, turned from his sad way to the Crusades, and went joyfully back, blessing the outlaws, as well he might, for "the best company that ever he came in." Without fail, Our Lady helping him, he promised to keep his tryst that day twelvemonth under the greenwood tree.

Next day, there was joy and revel at St. Mary's Abbey, where the proud priests thought that their debtor could not discharge the bond, and that they would forthwith enter into his goodly heritage, worth by the year as much as had been lent upon it. The prior, indeed, had pity on the poor man, whom he believed to be already suffering hunger and cold far beyond the sea; but the abbot, and that "fat-headed monk" the cellarer, were bent on exacting their bond; and here they had no less an officer than the high justice at hand, with other men of law, to adjudge the forfeiture if Sir Richard failed to pay, as like was.

But as this good company sat at meat, to the gate came their debtor, he and his followers all in poor apparel, for he meant to fool the covetous monks before paying them their due. He came lowly into the hall and knelt down, pretending he had not a penny, and praying for delay. With haughty looks and scornful words, the abbot spurned his entreaties, not even having the courtesy to

bid him rise. But his countenance changed, when Sir Richard leaped up, and out of a bag shook four hundred pounds of bright gold—

"Sir Abbot, and ye men of law,
Now have I held my day;
Now shall I have my land again,
For ought that you can say!"

Leaving them to stomach their discomfiture as best they could, he strode out of these inhospitable doors, and now first arrayed himself in the good clothes he had got from Robin Hood. Thus, in gallant guise, he rode home to tell his wife and children what had befallen, and bid them pray for the kind outlaw.

A year he lived at home, till he had gathered together four hundred pounds. This money in his cloak-bags, and carrying also a present of a hundred bows and a hundred sheaves of peacock-feathered arrows, inlaid with silver, in token of his gratitude for the loan, he set out to pay Robin on the appointed day, attended now by a goodly retinue of a hundred men, well armed and harnessed, so much had his state bettered through the year's delay. But as he rode along singing for lightness of heart, he came to a place where a wrestling was going on, and turned aside to see the sport. And from sport the wrestlers, it would seem, came to earnest, for the rest set upon a good yeoman, stranger as he was, who had deserved

the prize, and came near to have killed him in this quarrel. Then our knight, "for love of Robin Hood," would not suffer that any yeoman should be wronged, so he and his men spurred into the fray, and laid about them, till the yeoman was allowed to take his prize—a white bull, a tall steed richly equipped, a pair of gloves, a gold ring, and a pipe of wine. For the wine Sir Richard paid him down five marks, and set it abroach on the spot, to restore good humor among all who were there. This business delayed him some three hours; and thus went by the hour of noon, when he should have been at his tryst with Robin Hood.

Meanwhile Robin Hood awaited him impatiently, for he would not dine till the knight came to keep his word. Little John had returned to the greenwood, after playing some fine tricks of his own upon the sheriff of Nottingham. He, with Scarlett and Much, went out to see if any one were coming through the forest; and soon they were aware of a fat monk riding along the road, with some fifty attendants and more to grace his lordly state. When the outlaws stopped him, and gave their master's invitation to dinner, the monk called out on Robin Hood for a strong thief of whom he had heard no good. But all his men took to flight as soon as they heard the arrows whistling about their ears; and, willy-nilly, he was brought to the lodge in the greenwood.

Now Robin could sit down to his dinner, and the monk had sullenly to let himself be entertained by this jesting crew. After dinner they asked who he was, and their unwilling guest confessed himself the high cellarer of St. Mary's Abbey; whereupon the chief called to mind how, half in jest and half in earnest, Our Lady had been appointed the *borrow*, or security, between him and that faithless knight:

"'But I have great marvel,' said Robin,
'Of all this long day;
I dread Our Lady be wroth with me,
She sent me not my pay.'

"'Have no doubt, master,' said Little John
'Ye have no need, I say.
This monk it hath brought, I dare well swear,
For he is of her abbey.'

"'And she was a *borrow*,' said Robin,
'Between a knight and me,
Of a little money that I him lent
Under the greenwood tree. . . .

"'Thou toldest with thine own tongue,
Thou mayest not say nay,
How thou art her servant,
And servest her every day.

"'And thou art made her messenger
My money for to pay.'"

In short, the monk must tell how much money he had with him. Only twenty marks, he vowed; and if so, said Robin, he would rather lend to him than take a penny. But when they came to search, more than eight hundred pounds were counted out of this fat churchman's coffers, which Robin Hood took for himself, saying that Our Lady was the truest woman he ever knew, who paid twice the sum for which she had gone bail. The angry monk cried out in vain. He was allowed to go on his way, declaring very truly that he might have dined cheaper in the next town.

"'Greet well your abbot,' said Robin,
'And your prior, I you pray,
And bid him send me such a monk
To dinner every day.'"

Scarcely was the monk gone when up came the knight, giving for his delay a good excuse, as Robin judged, and said that whoever helped a worthy yeoman should always be his friend. Then Sir Richard would have paid down the four hundred pounds; but Robin told him that Our Lady herself had already paid the debt by her cellarer, so how could he take the money twice over? And to show how nobly he dealt with honest debtors, he made the knight a present of half the monk's money in return for that gift of bows and arrows we know of.

"'Have here four hundred pounds,
Thou gentle knight and true,
And buy horse and harness good,
And gild thy spurs all new.

"'And if thou fail any spending,
Come to Robin Hood,
And by my troth thou shalt none fail
The while I have any good.'"

So once more Sir Richard and Robin parted good friends; and all were merry but the poor monk, riding home to his abbey to tell what had become of its rents.

After this Robin Hood and his men lived quietly in the greenwood for a time, till they heard news of a great archery contest at Nottingham. And though it was the proud sheriff of that place, Robin Hood's sworn enemy, who was thus inviting all archers of the north to try their skill, our outlaws were not the men to stay away from such a meeting. So to Nottingham they went, sevenscore strong; and we may be sure that their leader proved himself the best man at the butts. But when he had taken his prize there rose a cry that this was Robin Hood, and the sheriff's men tried to seize him. Then his men bent their good bows, no longer in sport, and fighting they made their way out of the town. But Little John was sore hurt by an arrow in the knee, so that he prayed his master to kill him outright, that he might

neither hinder their escape nor fall alive into the hands of the sheriff. This Robin swore he would not do for all the gold in England, and, turning about from time to time to hold the pursuers at bay, they bore the wounded man to Sir Richard's castle, which, luckily, lay on their road. Right glad was the grateful knight to see his benefactor, and willingly he gave him refuge, shutting the castle gates, letting down the drawbridge and defying all the threats of the sheriff, who in vain summoned him to give up the king's enemy.

The baffled sheriff then rode straight to "London town, all for to tell our king." This was not the first complaint against Robin Hood that had come to the king's ears. He sent the sheriff back, promising himself to be at Nottingham within a fortnight to deal with that bold rebel and his friend the knight—a thing much easier said than done.

Meanwhile, after feasting with Sir Richard twelve days, and letting Little John be healed of his wound, Robin had gone back to the greenwood. Then that proud sheriff, not able to take the outlaw in his forest retreat, laid wait night and day for Sir Richard, till at last he caught him out hawking, and carried him off to prison at Nottingham, bound hand and foot. Straightway his wife got to horse, and rode to Robin Hood with her complaint:

"'Let thou never my wedded lord
Shamefully slain to be;
He is fast bound to Nottingham ward,
All for the love of thee!"

Nor was Robin one to desert his friend in such a strait. With all his men he hastened to Nottingham, met the sheriff and his prisoner in the street, cut Sir Richard's bonds, drove away the guard; and as to the sheriff, fetched him down from his horse with an arrow, then smote off his head, and left him lying there—no more to trouble honest archers.

Now was there more need than ever for both Robin Hood and Sir Richard to hide themselves in the woods. The king traveled to Nottingham with a great array, but could not come at the outlaws, though every day he heard how they were masterfully killing his deer. All he could do was to proclaim the knight a traitor and seize his lands, which yet he durst hardly bestow upon any other, since the new lord would never have peace so long as Robin Hood lived.

Full of wrath as the king was, not less grew his curiosity to see this bold outlaw, who thus set him and his officers at defiance. To this end he took advice to disguise himself as a monk, a kind of bait sure to tempt Robin. Dressed like a portly abbot, with five of his knights also robed in monkly weeds, he rode into the

forest; and sure enough he had not gone a mile there before up started Robin and his men. Robin took the king's horse by the bridle, saying:

"'Sir Abbot, by your leave,
Awhile ye must abide.

"'We be yeomen of this forest
Under the greenwood tree;
We live by our king's deer,
Other shift have not we.

"'And ye have churches and rents both,
And gold full great plenty:
Give us some of your spending
For Saint Charity.'"

In answer to this sturdy begging, the king said he had no more than forty pounds, which Robin forthwith divided, gave half of it to his men, and courteously returned the other half. Then the pretended abbot delivered him a message, as from the king, bidding him come to Nottingham, and showing him the royal broad seal as token, at the sight of which Robin fell reverently on his knees, declaring how he loved no man in the world like his king. So much had men belied him in calling him a rebel, when it was only sheriffs, keepers, bailiffs, and other ministers of justice that he could nowise abide!

In honor of the message he brought Robin Hood now bid the "abbot" stay to dinner, and served him with the

best of their woodland cheer. The guest was amazed to see how many merry men came flocking up at the sound of their chief's horn, and how dutifully they did obeisance to this outlaw.

> "His men are more at his bidding
> Than my men be at mine!"

So thought the king under his cowl. Then, after dinner, though the outlaws had drunk to the king's health, he was startled to see them handling their bows, half believing some treason was meant. But it was only to give proof of their skill in archery. Two wands were set up, fifty paces, too far apart judged the king, not knowing what sturdy arms these men had; and on each wand a rose garland, at which they were to shoot. Whoever missed the garland must lose his arrow and let himself be punished by a buffet on his bare head, for such was their custom; and even their chief himself had to submit to this forfeit of ill fortune.

Twice Robin cleft the wand, but at his third shot, as will happen to the best of archers, he missed the garland by three fingers' breadth and more, whereupon his followers laughingly demanded that he should stand forth and "take his pay." Since so it had to be, he delivered himself to the abbot, desiring him to administer the buffet. He objected that this was not the part of a churchman; but

when Robin urged him, giving him full leave to "smite on boldly," the king folded up his sleeve, and, without more ado, dealt the outlaw such a blow as had almost brought him to the ground.

It was Robin's turn to be astonished. Then, looking hard at that stalwart monk who had such kingly pith in his arm, all at once he was aware of the truth, and fell on his knees, and Sir Richard too—

"And so did all the wild outlaws,
When they saw them kneel.
'My lord, the King of England,
Now I know you well!'"

Thus he submitted himself, craving the king's mercy for him and his men. The king graciously forgave them all, on condition that Robin gave up this lawless life and went back with him to take service at the court.

Robin dutifully consented; then, the king and his knights having exchanged their monkish disguise for more seemly garments of Lincoln green, they all rode together to Nottingham, shooting by the way "pluck-buffet," and neither king nor outlaw spared each other if it were the mischance of either to stand a hearty cuff. When they arrived, the townspeople were alarmed to see so many green coats, thinking the king had been killed and that Robin Hood now came to sack the town.

"Full hastily they began to fly,
Both yeomen and knaves,
And old wives that might evil go,
They hopped on their staves.

"The king laughed full fast,
And commanded them again;
When they saw our comely king,
I wis they were full fain."

In short, all was now mirth and revelry at Nottingham, where the king in turn feasted his guests. Sir Richard got his lands again, and Robin Hood went up to London to dwell at the court.

But here the doughty woodsman was like a bird in a cage. He pined after his free forest life; he could not feel at home where he might not hunt for his own dinner. He spent all his money with the open hand which came readily to one who had been so long in the way of replenishing his treasury by robbing a rich monk or two. His men fell away from him when he could no longer keep them. And at length, when he had lived at court little over a year, the chance sight of some young archers shooting one day reminded him how he had once been accounted the best bowman in England; and he could no longer restrain his longing for the greenwood and the chase. Making excuse to the king of a pilgrimage, and getting leave to stay away no more than seven days, he

stole back to his old haunts for good and all. The first thing he did was to kill a deer; then he put his horn to his mouth, and at the well-remembered sound all the outlaws of the forest quickly gathered together, and ere long

> "Seven score of wight young men
> Came ready in a row."

With them he lived henceforth under the greenwood tree as of old, shooting the king's deer, and defying the king's officers—nay, paying no heed to the king's own command. No one durst meddle with him in the heart of the forest; and there he might have lived on many a year, but that he was beguiled by a monk, as some say, or as others tell, by a woman, and that of his own kin.

For Robin growing old, found his eye and hand failing him, so knew that he had fallen ill, and must seek the help of some cunning leech, such as were priests and nuns in those days. He betook himself, then, to the nunnery at Kirkley, of which his cousin was Prioress, and begged her to bleed him for his health's sake. But the false nun, set on to it by his enemies, was minded to bleed him to death who had so trusted himself in her hands. She locked him up in a private chamber, and let the vein run till next day at noon. In vain he tried to escape by the window; his strength was all ebbing away; he could do no more than blow three weak blasts on his bugle horn.

The faithful Little John heard from the forest, and knew his call—knew, too, by its feebleness that Robin must be near death. He hastened to Kirkley, where "he broke locks two or three," and made his way into that chamber in which Robin lay helpless. At the sight of his dying master, Little John fell on his knees, begging, in wrath and sorrow, for leave—

"'To burn fair Kirkley Hall,
And all their nunnery.'

"'Now nay, now nay,' quoth Robin Hood;
'That boon I'll not grant thee;
I never hurt woman in all my life,
Nor man in woman's company.

"'I never hurt fair maid in all my time,
Nor at my end shall it be.
But give me my bent bow in my hand,
And a broad arrow I'll let flee;
And where this arrow is taken up,
There shall my grave digg'd be.

"'Lay me a green sod under my head,
And another at my feet;
And lay my bent bow by my side,
Which was my music sweet;
And make my grave of gravel and green,
Which is most right and meet.'"

So died Robin Hood, as he had lived, and so was buried, and many there were to say a prayer over his grave.

"For he was a good outlaw,
And did poor men much good."

THE DISCONTENTED PENDULUM.

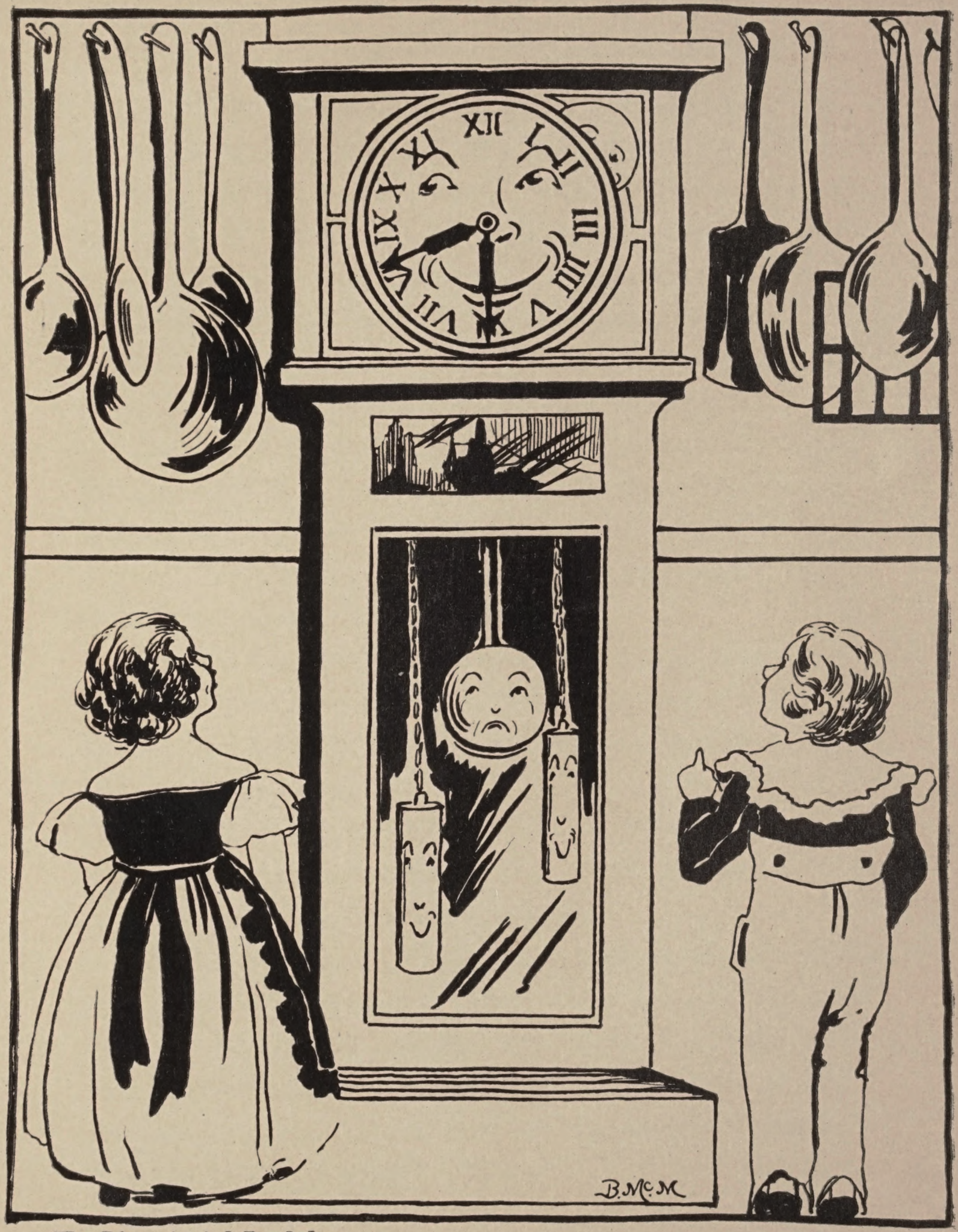
An old Clock, that had stood for fifty years in a farmer's kitchen without giving its owner any cause of complaint, early one summer's morning, before the family was stirring, suddenly stopped. Upon this the Dial-plate (if we may credit the fable) changed countenance with alarm; the Hands made an ineffectual effort to continue their course; the Wheels remained motionless with surprise; the Weights hung speechless. Each member felt disposed to lay the blame on the others.

At length the Dial instituted a formal inquiry into the cause of the stop, when Hands, Wheels, Weights, with one voice protested their innocence. But now a faint tick was heard from the Pendulum, who thus spoke:

"I confess myself to be the sole cause of the present stoppage, and am willing, for the general satisfaction, to assign my reasons. The truth is, that I am tired of ticking." Upon hearing this the old Clock became so enraged that it was on the point of striking.

"Lazy Wire!" exclaimed the Dial-plate.

"As to that," replied the Pendulum, "it is vastly easy for you, Mistress Dial, who have always, as everybody knows, set yourself up above me—it is vastly easy for



The Discontented Pendulum.

you, I say, to accuse other people of laziness—you who have nothing to do all your life but to stare people in the face, and to amuse yourself with watching all that goes on in the kitchen. Think, I beseech you, how you would like to be shut up for life in this dark closet, and wag backward and forward year after year, as I do."

"As to that," said the Dial, "is there not a window in your house on purpose for you to look through?"

"But what of that?" resumed the Pendulum. "Although there is a window, I dare not stop, even for an instant, to look out. Besides, I am really weary of my way of life; and, if you please, I'll tell you how I took this disgust at my employment.

"This morning I happened to be calculating how many times I should have to tick in the course only of the next twenty-four hours—perhaps some of you above there can tell me the exact sum?"

The Minute-hand, being quick at figures, instantly replied: "Eighty-six thousand four hundred times."

"Exactly so," replied the Pendulum.

"Well, I appeal to you all if the thought of this was not enough to fatigue one? And when I began to multiply the strokes of one day by those of months and years, really it is no wonder if I felt discouraged at the prospect; so, after a great deal of reasoning and hesitation, thought I to myself, 'I'll stop!'"

The Dial could scarcely keep its countenance during this harangue; but, resuming its gravity, thus replied: "Dear Mr. Pendulum, I am really astonished that such a useful, industrious person as yourself should have been overcome by this suggestion.

"It is true, you have done a great deal of work in your time; so have we all, and are likely to do; and though this may fatigue us to *think* of, the question is, Will it fatigue us to *do?* Would you now do me the favor to give about half a dozen strokes, to illustrate my argument?

The Pendulum complied, and ticked six times at its usual pace.

"Now," resumed the Dial, "was that exertion fatiguing to you?"

"Not in the least," replied the Pendulum; "it is not of six strokes that I complain, nor yet of sixty, but of millions."

"Very good," replied the Dial; "but recollect that, although you may *think* of a million strokes in an instant, you are required to *execute* but one; and that, however often you may hereafter have to swing, a moment will always be given you to swing in."

"That consideration staggers me, I confess," said the Pendulum.

"Then I hope," added the Dial-plate, "we shall all

immediately return to our duty, for the people will lie in bed till noon if we stand idling thus."

Upon this, the Weights, who had never been accused of *light* conduct, used all their influence in urging him to proceed; when, as with one consent, the Wheels began to turn, the Hands began to move, the Pendulum began to swing, and, to its credit, ticked as loud as ever; while a beam of the rising sun, that streamed through a hole in the kitchen-shutter, shining full upon the Dial-plate, made it brighten up as if nothing had been the matter.

When the farmer came down to breakfast he declared, upon looking at the Clock. that his watch had gained half an hour in the night.

—*Jane Taylor*

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN.

HAMELIN Town's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover city;
The river Weser deep and wide
Washes its walls on the southern side;
A pleasanter spot you never spied;
But, when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin, was a pity.

Rats!
They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in their cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cook's own ladles,
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats,
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

The Pied Piper of Hamelin.

At last the people in a body
To the Town-hall came flocking:
"'Tis clear," cried they, "our Mayor's a noddy;
And as for our Corporation—shocking
To think we buy gowns lined with ermine
For dolts that can't or won't determine
What's best to rid us of our vermin!
You hope, because you're old and obese,
To find in the furry civic robe ease!
Rouse up, sirs! Give your brains a racking
To find the remedy we're lacking,
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you packing!"
At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.
An hour they sat in council,
At length the Mayor broke silence:
"For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell;
I wish I were a mile hence!
It's easy to bid one rack one's brain—
I'm sure my poor head aches again,
I've scratched it so, and all in vain.
Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap!"
Just as he said this, what should hap
At the chamber door, but a gentle tap?
"Bless us," cried the Mayor, "what's that?

Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat!

"Come in!" the Mayor cried, looking bigger;
And in did come the strangest figure!
His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow, and half of red;
And he himself was tall and thin,
With sharp blue eyes each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,
No tuft on cheek, nor beard on chin,
But lips where smiles went out and in—
There was no guessing his kith and kin!
And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire:
Quoth one, "It's as if my great-grandsire,
Starting up at the trump of Doom's tone,
Had walked this way from his painted tombstone!"

He advanced to the council table:
And, "Please your honors," said he, "I'm able,
By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep, or swim, or fly, or run,
After me so as you never saw!
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,

The mole, the toad, the newt, the viper;
And people call me the Pied Piper.
Yet," said he, "poor piper as I am,
In Tartary I freed the Cham,
Last June, from his huge swarm of gnats;
I eased in Asia the Nizam
Of a monstrous brood of vampyre bats:
And as for what your brain bewilders,
If I can rid your town of rats
  Will you give a thousand guilders?"
  "One? fifty thousand!" was the exclamation
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

Into the street the Piper stept,
  Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic slept
  In his quiet pipe the while;
Then like a musical adept,
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled,
Like a candle flame where salt is sprinkled;
And ere three shrill notes the pipe had uttered,
You heard as if an army muttered;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling—

Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
  Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails, and pricking whiskers,
  Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives—
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped, advancing,
And step for step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the river Weser,
Wherein all plunged and perished,
Save one, who stout as Julius Cæsar,
Swam across, and lived to carry
(As *he* the manuscript he cherished)
To Rat-land home his commentary,
Which was, "At the first shrill notes of the pipe,
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
And putting apples wondrous ripe
Into a cider press's gripe;
And a moving away of pickle-tub boards,
And a leaving ajar of conserve cupboards,
And a drawing the corks of train-oil flasks,
And a breaking the hoops of butter casks;
And it seemed as if a voice
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery

Is breathed) called out, O rats, rejoice!
The world is grown to one vast drysaltery!
So munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,
Breakfast, dinner, supper, luncheon!
And just as a bulky sugar puncheon,
All ready staved, like a great sun shone
Glorious, scarce an inch before me,
Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore me!'
—I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple;
"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long poles!
Poke out the nests, and block up the holes!
Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace
Of the rats!" When suddenly up the face
Of the Piper perked in the market-place,
With a "First, if you please, my thousand guilders!"
A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked blue,
So did the Corporation too.
For council dinners made rare havock
With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave, Hock;
And half the money would replenish
Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow
With a gypsy coat of red and yellow!

"Besides," quoth the Mayor, with a knowing wink,
"Our business was done at the river's brink;
We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,
And what's dead can't come to life, I think.
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink
From the duty of giving you something for drink,
And a matter of money to put in your poke;
But, as for the guilders, what we spoke
Of them, as you very well know, was in joke—
Beside, our losses have made us thrifty:
A thousand guilders! come, take fifty!"

The Piper's face fell, and he cried,
"No trifling! I can't wait beside!
I've promised to visit by dinner-time
Bagdat, and accept the prime
Of the head-cook's pottage, all he's rich in,
For having left in the caliph's kitchen,
Of a nest of scorpions no survivor.
With him I proved no bargain-driver,
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!
And folks who put me in a passion
May find me pipe to another fashion."
"How?" cried the Mayor, "d'ye think I'll brook
Being worse treated than a cook?
Insulted by a lazy ribald
With idle pipe and vesture piebald?

You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst,
Blow your pipe there till you burst."
Once more he stept into the street,
  And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth, straight cane;
  And ere he blew three notes (such sweet
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
  Never gave the enraptured air),
There was a rustling that seemed like a bustling,
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hustling,
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,
Little hands clapping and little tongues chattering,
And like fowls in a farmyard when barley is scattering
Out came the children running:
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,
Tripping and skipping ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,
Unable to move a step, or cry
To the children merrily skipping by—
And could only follow with the eye
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
And now the Mayor was on the rack,

And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,
As the Piper turned from the High Street
To where the Weser rolled its waters
Right in the way of their sons and daughters!
However he turned from south to west,
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,
And after him the children pressed;
Great was the joy in every breast.
'He never can cross that mighty top;
He's forced to let the piping drop,
And we shall see our children stop!"
When, lo! as they reached the mountain's side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed;
And the Piper advanced, and the children followed,
And when all were in to the very last,
The door in the mountain side shut fast.
Did I say, all? No! One was lame,
And could not dance the whole of the way;
And in after years, if you would blame
His sadness, he was used to say—
"It's dull in our town since my playmates left!
I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the Piper also promised me:

For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town and just at hand,
Where waters gushed and fruit trees grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And everything was strange and new;
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,
And their dogs outran our fallow-deer,
And honey-bees had lost their stings,
And horses were born with eagles' wings;
And just as I became assured
My lame foot would be speedily cured,
The music stopped and I stood still,
And found myself outside the hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go now limping as before,
And never hear of that country more!"
The Mayor sent east, west, north, and south
To offer the Piper by word of mouth,
    Wherever it was man's lot to find him,
Silver and gold to his heart's content,
If he'd only return the way he went,
  And bring the children behind him.
But when they saw 'twas a lost endeavor,
And piper and dancers were gone forever,
They made a decree that lawyers never
  Should think their records dated duly,

If after the day of the month and year
These words did not as well appear,
"And so long after what happened here
On the twenty-second of July,
Thirteen hundred and seventy-six;"
And the better in memory to fix
The place of the children's last retreat,
They called it the Pied Piper's Street—
Where any one playing on pipe or tabor,
Was sure for the future to lose his labor.
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern
To shock with mirth a street so solemn;
But opposite the place of the cavern
They wrote the story on a column,
And on the great church window painted
The same, to make the world acquainted
How their children were stolen away;
And there it stands to this very day.

And I must not omit to say
That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people, that ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress
On which their neighbors lay such stress,
To their fathers and mothers having risen
Out of some subterraneous prison

Into which they were trepanned
Long ago in a mighty band,
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,
But how or why, they don't understand.

So, Willy, let you and me be wipers
Of scores out with all men—especially pipers,
And whether they pipe us free from rats or from mice
If we've promised them aught, let us keep our promise.

—*Robert Browning.*

FOX
PRINTINGHOUSE
61 & 63 RUTGERS SLIP
NEW-YORK

Told in the Twilight

DEC 15 1898

Blanche McManus '98

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